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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/758,097	01/16/2004	Hiroshi Funakubo	118365	4983

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EXAMINER

MCDONALD, RODNEY GLENN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1753

DATE MAILED: 10/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/758,097	Applicant(s) FUNAKUBO, HIROSHI	
	Examiner Rodney G. McDonald	Art Unit 1753	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 23-27 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I, claims 1-22 in the reply filed on September 15, 2005 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the search fields overlap. This is not found persuasive because the method and product are classified in different search fields.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 2, 3, 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 2, 3, 13 and 14 are indefinite because it is unclear what the difference is.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was

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not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiyoshi (Japan 2001-064099) in view of Shiiki et al. (U.S. Pat. 4,576,876).

Regarding claim 1, Akiyoshi teach a method for fabricating a Fe-Si film. (See Abstract) A substrate is first prepared. (Machine translation 0067) The planes of the substrate can be oriented (100) or (111). (See Abstract; Machine translation 0065) A Fe-Si alloy based film is formed on the substrate epitaxially. (See Abstract)

Regarding claim 4, Akiyoshi teach utilizing RF magnetron sputtering. (Machine translation 0065)

Regarding claim 5, the substrate can be heated to 650 degrees C, which is within Applicant's claims. (See Abstract)

Regarding claims 6, 9, the substrate can be made of (100) Si. (See Abstract)

Regarding claim 8, the substrate can be made of (111) Si. (See Machine translation 0065)

The differences between Akiyoshi and the present claims is that the crystal planes being oriented perpendicular to the main surface of the substrate is not discussed (Claim 1), the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based film being set to 16% or below is not discussed (Claim 2), the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based thin being set within -6% to 16% is not discussed (Claim 3), the film containing Fe crystal planes and Si crystal planes alternately stacked is not

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discussed (Claim 7), the Fe-Si based thin film oriented commensurate with the 110/101 plane is not discussed (Claim 8) and the Fe-Si based thin film oriented commensurate with the (100) plane is not discussed (Claim 9).

Regarding the crystal planes being oriented perpendicular to the main surface of the substrate of claim 1, Shiiki et al. teach that underlying material for a film of Fe-Si alloy should contain crystals of a hexagonal system so that the c-axis of the material underneath the Fe-Si alloy layer extends at right angles to the surface of the material. (Column 2 lines 35-45; Column 3 lines 36-68)

The motivation for providing a material underlying the film of Fe-Si alloy to have crystals that extend at right angles to the surface of the material is that it allows improvement in anisotropy for magnetic layers deposited on the Fe-Si alloy film. (Column 3 lines 66-68)

Regarding the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based film being set to 16% or below of claim 2 and the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based thin film being set within -6% to 16% of claim 3, since Akiyoshi teaches depositing on an oriented substrate which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process conditions are the same the film is believed to fall within Applicant's required ranges. (See Akiyoshi discussed above)

Regarding the film containing Fe crystal planes and Si crystal planes alternately stacked of claim 7, since Akiyoshi et al. teach depositing on an oriented substrate, which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process conditions of Akiyoshi et al. are the same as Applicant's the FeSi film deposited by Akiyoshi et al. is believed

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to produce alternately stacked Fe and Si crystal planes. (See Akiyoshi et al. discussed above)

Regarding the Fe-Si based thin film oriented commensurate with the (110)/(101) plane of Claim 8, since Akiyoshi et al. teach depositing on an oriented substrate which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process conditions of Akiyoshi et al. are the same as Applicant's the Fe-Si based thin film of Akiyoshi et al. is believed to be commensurate with the (110)/(101) of Applicant's claims.

Regarding the Fe-Si based thin film oriented commensurate with the (100) plane of Claim 9, since Akiyoshi et al. teach depositing on an oriented substrate which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process conditions of Akiyoshi et al. are the same as Applicant's the Fe-Si based thin film of Akiyoshi et al. is believed to be commensurate with the (100) plane of Applicant's claims.

The motivation for forming a film with Fe and Si alternately stacking in the film and controlling orientation of the Fe-Si film is that it allows production of a high quality β -FeSi₂ epitaxial layer. (See Abstract)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Akiyoshi by utilizing crystal planes oriented perpendicular to the main surface of the substrate as taught by Shiiki et al. and to have formed a film with Fe and Si alternately stacking in the film and controlling orientation in the Fe-Si film as taught by Akiyoshi because it allows for improvement in anisotropy for magnetic layers deposited on the Fe-Si alloy film and for production of a high quality β -FeSi₂ epitaxial layer.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiyoshi in view of Shiiki et al. as applied to claims 1-9 above, and further in view of Noguchi et al. (U.S. Pat. 5,211,761) and Lee et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,531,235).

The differences not yet discussed are the use of a substrate being made of (100) Y₂O₃-ZrO₂ and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry is not discussed (Claim 10).

Regarding the use of a substrate being made of (100) Y₂O₃-ZrO₂ and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry of claim 10, Noguchi et al. recognize that a substrate can be made of ceramics including Y₂O₃ and ZrO₂ for supporting a FeSi₂ layer. (Noguchi et al. Column 4 lines 46-58; Column 3 lines 27-31) Lee et al. teach that a YSZ material for supporting a subsequent layer can be oriented in the (100) direction. (Lee et al. Column 5 lines 40-48) Since the film of Fe-Si is grown on a similar oriented material as Applicant's the film will have the two rotational symmetry.

The motivation for use of a substrate being made of (100) Y₂O₃-ZrO₂ and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry is that it allows for orienting the subsequent layer. (Lee et al. Column 5 lines 45-47)

Therefore it would have been obvious to use a substrate being made of (100) Y₂O₃-ZrO₂ and a Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry as taught by Noguchi et al. and Lee et al. because it allows for orienting the subsequent layer.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiyoshi in view of Shiiki et al. as applied to claims 1-9 above, and further in view of Noguchi et al. (U.S. Pat. 5,211,761) and Schoop et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,537,689).

The differences not yet discussed are the substrate being made of (001) Al_2O_3 and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in three rotational symmetry is not discussed (Claim 11).

Noguchi et al. recognize that a substrate can be made of ceramics including Y_2O_3 and ZrO_2 for supporting a FeSi_2 layer. (Noguchi et al. Column 4 lines 46-58; Column 3 lines 27-31) Schoop et al. teach a buffer material for a subsequent layer that is (001) oriented and can be Al_2O_3 . (Schoop et al. Column 3 lines 10-18; Column 3 lines 49-58) Since the film of Fe-Si is grown on a similar oriented material as Applicant's the film will have the two rotational symmetry.

The motivation for using a substrate being made of (001) Al_2O_3 and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in three rotational symmetry is that it allows for orienting the subsequent layer. (Schoop et al. Column 4 lines 44-45)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have utilized a substrate being made of (001) Al_2O_3 and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in three rotational symmetry as taught by Noguchi et al. and Schoop et al. because it allows for orienting the subsequent layer.

Claims 12-16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiiki et al. (U.S. Pat. 4,576,876) in view of Akiyoshi et al. (Japan 2001-064099).

Regarding claim 12, Shiiki et al. teach a method for forming a FeSi film on a substrate. (Column 2 lines 35-45) Shiiki et al. teach forming a buffer layer on a substrate such that the crystal grains are oriented perpendicular to the surface of the substrate. (Column 3 lines 46-68) A film of Fe-Si is deposited on the buffer layer. (Column 2 lines 35-45)

The differences between Shiiki et al. and the present claims is that preparing the substrate is not discussed (Claim 12), the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based film being set to 16% or below is not discussed (Claim 13), the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based thin being set within -6% to 16% is not discussed (Claim 14), utilizing RF magnetron sputtering to form the Fe-Si film is not discussed (Claim 15), heating the buffer layer is not discussed (Claim 16), the film containing Fe crystal planes and Si crystal planes alternately stacked is not discussed (Claim 18).

Regarding preparing of the substrate of claim 12, Akiyoshi teach a method for fabricating a Fe-Si film. (See Abstract) A substrate is first prepared. (Machine translation 0067) The planes of the substrate can be oriented (100) or (111). (See Abstract; Machine translation 0065) A Fe-Si alloy based film is formed on the substrate epitaxially. (See Abstract)

Regarding the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based film being set to 16% or below of claim 13 and the difference between the substrate and the Fe-Si based thin being set within -6% to 16% of claim 14, since Akiyoshi teach depositing on an oriented substrate which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process

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conditions are the same the film is believed to fall within Applicant's required ranges.

(See Akiyoshi discussed above)

Regarding utilizing RF magnetron sputtering to deposit the Fe-Si film of claim 15, Akiyoshi teach Rf magnetron sputtering to deposit the Fe-Si film. (See Machine Translation 0065)

Regarding the heating of the buffer layer of claim 16, Akiyoshi teach heating at 650 degrees C when depositing a Fe-Si film. (See Akiyoshi abstract)

Regarding the film containing Fe crystal planes and Si crystal planes alternately stacked of claim 18, since Akiyoshi et al. teach depositing on an oriented substrate, which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process conditions of Akiyoshi et al. are the same as Applicant's the FeSi film deposited by Akiyoshi et al. is believed to produce alternately stacked Fe and Si crystal planes. (See Akiyoshi et al. discussed above)

The motivation for preparing the substrate, controlling the orientation, utilizing RF magnetron sputtering to form the Fe-Si film, heating the buffer layer, alternately stacking the film containing Fe crystal planes and Si crystal planes is that it allows for production of a high quality β -FeSi₂ epitaxial layer. (See Abstract)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Shiiki et al. by preparing the substrate, by controlling the orientation, by utilizing RF magnetron sputtering to form the Fe-Si film, by heating the buffer layer, by alternately stacking the film containing Fe crystal planes and

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Si crystal planes as taught by Akiyoshi et al because it allows for production of a high quality β -FeSi₂ epitaxial layer.

Claims 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiiki et al. in view of Akiyoshi et al. as applied to claims 12-16 and 18 above, and further in view of Yano et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,045,626).

The differences not yet discussed are the composition and orientation of the buffer layer (Claim 17) and the Fe-Si based thin film oriented commensurate with the 110/101 plane is not discussed (Claim 19).

Yano et al. teach a YSZ (yttria zirconia) buffer layer where the film has a 111 orientation. (Column 11 lines 38-47; Column 10 lines 52-64) Since Akiyoshi et al. teach depositing on an oriented substrate which is identical to Applicant's substrate and since the process conditions of Akiyoshi et al. are the same as Applicant's the Fe-Si based thin film of Akiyoshi et al. is believed to be commensurate with the (110)/(101) of Applicant's claims.

The motivation for utilizing a particular composition and orientation of the buffer layer is that it allows for providing a substrate suitable for electronic devices. (Column 3 lines 12-16)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have utilized a particular composition and orientation for the buffer layer as taught by Yano et al. because it allows for providing a substrate suitable for electronic devices.

Claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiiki et al. in view of Akiyoshi et al. as applied to claims 12-16 and 18 above, and further in view of Lee et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,531,235).

The differences not yet discussed are the composition of the buffer layer and orientation of the buffer layer and the Fe-Si based thin film oriented commensurate with the (100) plane is not discussed (Claims 20) and where the Fe-Si film is epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry is not discussed (claim 21)

Regarding claims 20, 21, Lee et al. teach that a YSZ buffer layer for supporting a subsequent layer can be oriented in the (100) direction. (Lee et al. Column 5 lines 40-48) Since the film of Fe-Si is grown on a similar oriented material as Applicant's the film will have the two rotational symmetry.

The motivation for use of a substrate being made of (100) $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$ and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry is that it allows for orienting the subsequent layer. (Lee et al. Column 5 lines 45-47)

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have utilized a substrate being made of (100) $Y_2O_3-ZrO_2$ and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in two rotational symmetry as taught by Lee et al. because it allows for orienting the subsequent layer.

Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiiki et al. in view of Akiyoshi et al. as applied to claims 12-16 and 18 above, and further in view of Schoop et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,537,689).

The differences not yet discussed are the composition of the buffer layer and orientation of the buffer layer and the Fe-Si thin film epitaxially grown in three rotation symmetry. (Claim 22)

Regarding claim 22, Schoop et al. teach a buffer layer for a subsequent layer that is (001) oriented and can be Al_2O_3 . (Schoop et al. Column 3 lines 10-18; Column 3 lines 49-58) Since the film of Fe-Si is grown on a similar oriented material as Applicant's the film will have the two rotational symmetry.

The motivation for using a substrate being made of (001) Al_2O_3 and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in three rotational symmetry is that it allows for orienting the subsequent layer. (Schoop et al. Column 4 lines 44-45)


Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have utilized a substrate being made of (001) Al_2O_3 and the Fe-Si based thin film being epitaxially grown in three rotational symmetry as taught by Schoop et al. because it allows for orienting the subsequent layer.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rodney G. McDonald whose telephone number is 571-272-1340. The examiner can normally be reached on M- Th with Every other Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nam X. Nguyen can be reached on 571-272-1342. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Rodney G. McDonald
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1753

RM
October 19, 2005